GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:779
ANSWERED ON:25.02.2009
HEALTHCARE INFRASTRUCTURE
Verma Shri Ravi Prakash

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether insufficient healthcare infrastructure is one of the major hindrances to widen the scope of healthcare insurance in the country as reported in the Times of India dated 10 December, 2008;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government proposes to build any alternative system to meet the deficiency in the existing healthcare infrastructure;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE (SMT. PANABAKA LAKSHMI)

(a) to (e) Yes, Sir. Health insurance as a form of health financing prerequisites a high level of public health expenditure and preparedness of facilities as it tends to push the cost of health care. India's public health expenditure at around 1% of GDP is one of the lowest in the world. Government is committed to raise the same to 2 to 3% of GDP. In this scenario investment in the health insurance

mode of financing to the exclusion of public health structure strengthening may not be the most viable option for India.

Therefore to provide comprehensive affordable and accessible health care to the rural and the vulnerable population, the Government has launched the National Rural Health Mission to meet the deficiency in the existing public care infrastructure in the country.

The National Rural Health Mission provisions for funds to the States through the State Programme Implementation Plans for strengthening the public health facilities, for improved access and better care to the poor and the vulnerable in the country.